

Lumberjack 100

I am Still Tempted

So on June 8, 2011 I receive an e-mail from Brenda with the subject "I am still tempted". Need less to say, I was immediately curious...

I am a planner and like to plan things out in advance. Over the winter we agreed to do six of the National Endurance Racing Series races. I entered us into the races, planned lodging, travel, etc. Most of the agreements were made long before spring.

Well, the temptation Brenda wrote about what she was interested in doing an additional race called The Lumberjack 100 in Michigan. This race fills within hours of opening registration, but often within a week of the race you can find someone selling an entry. It is funny: 2 months before the race you could not pay double for an entry, but our timing was perfect. We started looking for an entry 3 days before the closing for transfer. Within hours of making the decision to look for entries I had located 2 and booked a hotel. So now we have a 10 hour drive in front of us.

I talked to a buddy that had done the race before to get a little beta on the course: 95% single track, 9k of vertical and sand. All of that was correct, and mosquitoes.

The course was super fun! The start was pretty fast for the single track, but spread out about 45 minutes into it. Looking at past results we were guessing a finishing time of 8:15 to 8:30 for the 3 lap course. Brenda and I stayed together for the first half lap until I went ahead on one of the short climbs. I figured that was the last I would see of her, but really how many times for I need to learn that lesson?

We set up our aid drops at the start finish line. Getting aid was pretty straight forward and the mosquitoes encouraged a fast transition.

I cruised into my last aid stop and was getting ready to leave when Brenda pulled up. I said "fantastic this will make the last lap a lot for interesting". I can always count on her to finish strong. I bet we passed 20 guys on the last lap. Having her push the pace took my mind off my suffering. With about 15 minutes to go I told her that we were very close to braking 8:30, but she just growled a little and I did not bring it up again.

Brenda went deep into the redline on the last lap and paid for it. We went 8:30:05 and had the pleasure to meet the EMS guys after the race. Brenda was very much overheated and I was a little worried. All turned out okay after a few ice bags and some quality time in car with the air conditioning blasting.

If you like single track this is the race for you. The sand requires constant pedaling, and the single track makes you stay focused all day. The weather in MI this time of year is great - we just had an unusually warm day.

Four down and three to go!